



**St. Peter's**  
Church of England Primary School

LOVE LEARN SHINE

*Shine in the light and love of God.*

# Debt Policy & Procedures

Date Adopted by Finance and Resources Committee	22.10.2021
Date for Review	October 2024



From October 2021, St Peter's CE Primary School will adopt a clear 'no debt' policy relating to all 'paid for' services including; school meals service, residential, extra-curricular clubs and activities including music lessons.

This policy and procedures do not relate to voluntary contributions which the school may request from time to time to support educational activities such as school trips. We will however make clear in relation to school trips and other similar activities that if we are unable to collect enough voluntary contributions these events may not always be able to go ahead as planned.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

If parents believe that their child(ren) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application.

## **School Meals**

At present all children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 (Years 1&2) receive a universal free school meal. Some children in Key Stage Two receive an economic free school meal. If either of these apply then the expectations below in relation to school meal payment do not apply.

Parent/s who are accessing paid meals should **have sufficient funds in their [Parent Pay](#) account to cover a minimum of one day of school lunches. Ideally where possible parents would have a balance that covers at least a week.** Balances can be checked and paid at any time during each half term by parents via [Parent Pay](#).

- Children will not be provided with any paid services at the start of a new week if there is any outstanding balance from the previous week. Parents will be informed in the middle of each week if there is a negative balance in their account. Debts will be monitored each week by the admin team and parents notified when debts occur. Contact will be made each Friday to notify parents of the need to clear debts or make alternative lunch provision for their child or children.
- If the debt is not cleared, parents must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch returning the child by 12.50 p.m. in time for the afternoon session. In cases where a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the school will contact the parent to ask them to come to school with a packed lunch or collect their child to provide a lunch at home.

- In the event that a debt increases and no payments are made the head teacher reserves the right to refer the debt to the 'Children & Young People's Service' who will start proceedings to recover the debt. Social Services may also be informed that these parents are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their children at lunchtime.

## **Clubs**

Some clubs operate without any charge however for some especially those running after school there is a sometimes a small charge. Where this is the case there should be sufficient funds placed in the Parent Pay account to cover 1 week of club. Children will not be allowed to attend the club if there is more than a one week outstanding balance.

Please note this does not apply to Fun Club (before and after school care) who have their own payment and debit procedures.

## **Residential trips – payment is mandatory**

Because residential take place beyond the school day it is acceptable for schools to charge parents for the elements that are beyond the usual school day education provision.

We aspire for all children who wish to access residential experiences to be able to do so and aim to work with parents to achieve this.

1. Parents will be given advance notice of residential trips including the costs. This will typically be several months.
2. Payment plans will be made available to all. Payment of these plans will be monitored.
3. With the agreement of the HT payment plans may occasionally go beyond the date of the residential visit. This would only be the case where the payments to the payment plan up to the date of the visit have been maintained.
4. Approximately 2/3 days before the deadline for payment an email reminder will be sent, with the 'Finance Update' attached.
5. The day after the deadline for payment, a written reminder (copy of original letter) will be sent.
6. If no response has been received and there is no payment plan agreement, the child's place on the trip may be cancelled.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy parents will understand that meals, extra-curricular clubs be paid for in advance and help us to ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.